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of Engineers**  
Seattle District



# **10 Tips to Improve Your Proposal**

## **USACE SMALL BUSINESS CONFERENCE**

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# 1. Read the RFP

- **Thoroughly**
- **How will source selection be accomplished?**
  - **Lowest Priced Technically Acceptable**
  - **Best Value Trade Off**
- **Pay attention to the criteria order and weights – it shows what's important to us**
- **Ask questions early to ensure there is sufficient time to respond**



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## 2. Address all aspects of the Criteria

- Create a **matrix** of sections L&M (or Section 00100's if Corps of Engineers) and Scope of Work, by paragraph with each requirement to use as a **checklist** to ensure your proposal is complete.
- Include your checklist with your proposal.



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### 3. Be succinct

- Avoid being too wordy
- Use bullets, underlines, bolding
- If there is a page count – stick to it!



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## 4. Experience should relate to the project



- In terms of scope, size, \$ value, complexity
- Should be recent – within the past 5-10 years or as required by RFP
- Be clear – is it experience of firm or people? Or, is it experience or sub or mentor?

# 5. Make sure

## qualifications of staff match RFP



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- Ensure each team member's quals. address EACH ASPECT of the criteria
- List relevant experience of team members
- Make sure team members are available (not on a job that just started or is only half way completed)



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# 6. Organization Chart — who's in charge?



- Identify one person to be in charge of entire team
- Person should be from YOUR company, not a sub or your mentor
- Clear lines of communication
- Identify person and company (with location) for each role



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# 7. Address Quality



- Include the quality team on Organization Chart – even if it's not asked for
- Quality is important to us – this shows it's important to you
- Show/describe how the quality control team interacts with the execution team





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# 8. Address Performance Problems head-on



- Get copies of your CCASS evaluations (503-808-4590) ([www.nwp.usace.army.mil](http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil))
- Explain any marginal or unsat. items within the evaluation as well as overall ratings.
- Check out the past performance of your proposed subs.



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## 9. QC your Proposal



- Have an outside reviewer ensure everything is covered (someone not involved in putting the proposal together).
- If you copy another proposal, make sure you only refer to the current project.
- Use spell check!



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# 10. Be a Learning Organization



- **Ask for a debriefing (in writing)**
- **Attitude is everything – go to the debriefing to LEARN:**
  - **How were you rated?**
  - **What did you do well?**
  - **What areas can you improve?**



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